

In San Diego, Bob Dole tried to write a platform saying that the GOP is a "tolerant" party. He's right. Just look at the Ethics Committee. They'll "tolerate" anything that NEWT GINGRICH does.

Dole wants to build a bridge to the past. So does the Ethics Committee—back to the days when Congress conducted its business in the dark, out of the public eye.

Speaker GINGRICH, you might as well exercise some power and call on the Ethics Committee to release its report on your ethics scandals. After all, once the elections are over, you might not have any power left to exercise.

TAX RELIEF

(Mr. ROYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, in the United States today, the tax burden on families is at a record high. In 1948, tax rates equalled 3 percent of income for the average family of four, but today it is 24 percent. That is eight times more than it was 40 years ago, and on top of that, our system is complex, it is convoluted, it is confusing. As IRS study estimates that taxpayers spend 5 billion man-hours filling out their return every year. That is more time than is spent in the entire automobile industry in this country in terms of man-hours.

We need significant tax relief, and that is exactly what the Republican plan will do: tax relief, spending cuts, deficit reduction, and the resulting smaller, more efficient, and less intrusive Government.

Ultimately, our plan is simple. It makes sense. Americans work hard for their living and should keep more of what they earn. They do not need the Government telling them how to spend their money.

LET THE SUN SHINE IN ON REPORT ON SPEAKER GINGRICH HELD IN ETHICS COMMITTEE

(Mr. POMEROY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, the only thing clear at this point in the Ethics Committee's handling of the charges against Speaker GINGRICH are that serious questions exist, and the Ethics Committee does not have the ability to resolve questions involving Speaker GINGRICH.

A couple of commonsense principles commonly expressed where I come from maybe will provide some guidance in terms of how to proceed. The best is that sunlight is the best disinfectant. Here the Ethics Committee has in its possession a report prepared by an outside special counsel, funded by taxpayer expense. There is no quicker, simple—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. HOKE. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). The gentleman from North Dakota [Mr. POMEROY] will suspend.

The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I make the point of order that discussion of the House Ethics Committee's proceedings on the floor of the House is not in order in the House. Is that correct?

□ 1030

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). The Chair sustains the gentleman's point of order. The gentleman from North Dakota may proceed in order.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I make a further point of order that the House rules provide that buttons may not be worn at the time that speeches are made on the floor of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair sustains the point of order. The gentleman should remove the button.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I will remove the button, but I have a point of parliamentary inquiry regarding the first ruling made by the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. POMEROY. Is it the Chair's position that I may make no statement regarding the outside special counsel's report, commissioned and paid for by taxpayer funds regarding the charges against Speaker GINGRICH which is presently held at the Ethics Committee?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would point out to the gentleman that prior rulings of the Chair have indicated and ruled that no references may be made to the pending matters before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct Committee unless a question of privilege is actually pending in the House.

Mr. POMEROY. I have a further question along the lines of the gentleman's ruling.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. POMEROY. The report presently prepared and before the committee is itself a component of the committee's deliberations but I was not talking about the committee's deliberations. I was talking about release of the report. That to me would seem to fall outside the Speaker's ruling.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The scope of the gentleman's comments is within the Speaker's ruling and such comments have previously been ruled out of order. The gentleman will proceed in order.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I think it is vital that we establish as a Congress our commitment to publish that report and to release those documents so the country can judge whether or not the man second in line to be President, the Speaker of the House, should be in that position.

Mr. Speaker, I was not called on that last sentence because those were not my words, those were the words of NEWT GINGRICH when he called for the release of the report against Speaker Wright. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. Release the report.

POLITICIZING THE ETHICS COMMITTEE PROCESS

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I would just encourage this House in the closing days of our business as we try to complete the work of the people to remember one thing, and, that is, that there is a very well-defined, well-developed, thoughtfully conceived and thoughtfully planned-out program for examining and dealing with ethical violation allegations in this body, that that process has been going on in a non-politicized way for some time with respect to a broad spectrum of allegations that have been brought regarding many Members of this House with respect to many different issues, and that I would encourage Members on both sides of the aisle to not politicize this process and especially to not pressure their own colleagues to give in to this extremely alluring but very wrong motivation to become part of the political process as opposed to the workings of the House.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, on a day like this when we limit 1-minutes, 1-minutes are still in order at the end of legislative business, are they not? I would like to do a 1-minute tonight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. DORNAN. I thank the Chair.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV. Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken later today.

COMMENDING AMERICANS IN COLD WAR

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 180) commending the Americans who served the United States during the period known as the cold war, as amended.